

Introduced by Senator Yee

(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Olsen and Pan)

March 25, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 102—Relative to commercially sexually exploited children.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 102, as introduced, Yee. Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Awareness Week.

This resolution would recognize April 21, 2014, through April 27, 2014, as California's Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Awareness Week.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, President Obama declared January 2011 National
2 Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, culminating
3 in National Freedom Day on February 1, 2011; and

4 WHEREAS, President Obama called "upon the People of the
5 United States to recognize the vital role we can play in ending
6 modern slavery," and that fighting this scourge is a shared
7 responsibility; and

8 WHEREAS, Our nation was founded upon the principle of
9 freedom, and we affirmed this principle with the ratification of the
10 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution that guaranteed
11 people within our borders protection from slavery; and

12 WHEREAS, Americans are committed to individual freedom
13 and will do all that they can to help eliminate modern day slavery,
14 which includes human trafficking; and

1 WHEREAS, Human trafficking can occur in many forms. Sex
2 trafficking, a modern form of sex slavery, is one type of trafficking
3 that men, women, and children are subjected to; and

4 WHEREAS, The United States Department of State's
5 "Trafficking in Persons Report 2013" describes how the United
6 States is a growing magnet for traffickers to conduct their illegal
7 and inhumane business; and

8 WHEREAS, Americans widely recognize children as a
9 vulnerable population worthy of, and in need of, protection from
10 those who would seek to take advantage of them, and children are
11 not currently safe from commercial sexual exploitation. The
12 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) estimates that 100,000
13 children are sold for sex each year in the United States; and

14 WHEREAS, Despite national, state, and local efforts to address
15 sex trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation is a growing
16 industry; and

17 WHEREAS, California is a prime destination for human
18 trafficking, along with other states including New York, Texas,
19 and Nevada; and

20 WHEREAS, California's large international border, numerous
21 ports and airports, and overall large economy make children in
22 this state particularly vulnerable to human trafficking; and

23 WHEREAS, The Legislature has recognized January 2013, and
24 each January thereafter, as National Slavery and Human Trafficking
25 Prevention Month, and has recognized February 1, 2013, and each
26 February 1 thereafter, as California's Free From Slavery Day; and

27 WHEREAS, Forms of child sexual exploitation include child
28 sex trafficking, child pornography, and child sex tourism; and

29 WHEREAS, Children in California are particularly vulnerable
30 to commercial sexual exploitation. The FBI has determined that
31 three of the nation's 13 High Intensity Child Prostitution Areas
32 are located within California in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and
33 San Diego; and

34 WHEREAS, Children who fall prey to sexual exploiters are
35 frequently those with prior involvement in the child welfare system.
36 The California Child Welfare Council reports that 50 to 80 percent
37 of victims of commercial sexual exploitation are or were previously
38 involved with the child welfare system. Many of these children
39 have a history of sexual abuse; and

1 WHEREAS, Commercial sexual exploitation of children in
2 California was previously perceived as primarily an international
3 issue, the domestic nature of this problem is becoming increasingly
4 evident. California's nine human trafficking task forces identified
5 1,277 victims over two years, 72 percent of whom were from the
6 United States; and

7 WHEREAS, Commercial sexual exploitation of children usually
8 begins during adolescence. For boys, the average age of onset is
9 between 11 and 14 years of age, and for girls the average age of
10 onset is between 12 and 14 years of age; and

11 WHEREAS, It is presumed that many more cases of commercial
12 sexual exploitation of children are not identified. The concealed
13 nature of these crimes poses a barrier to identifying and rescuing
14 commercially sexually exploited children. Raising awareness is
15 vital to addressing the commercial sexual exploitation of children;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Children who are or were commercially sexually
18 exploited often suffer chronic health problems. This includes high
19 rates of mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress
20 disorder, depression, and sleep disorders. Sexually transmitted
21 infections such as HIV and AIDS are the most common medical
22 consequences of commercial sexual exploitation of children; and

23 WHEREAS, Many commercially sexually exploited children
24 are funneled into the juvenile justice system as delinquents rather
25 than focusing on providing intervention and rehabilitation services
26 as victims; and

27 WHEREAS, The Legislature recognizes the vital role California
28 can play in preventing, and one day ending, this modern day sex
29 slavery of children; now, therefore be it

30 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
31 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes April 21, 2014,
32 though April 27, 2014, as California's Commercial Sexual
33 Exploitation of Children Awareness Week; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Legislature calls upon all Californians to
35 follow the charge of the Congress of the United States to adopt
36 the approach of the "4Ps—prosecution, protection, prevention,
37 and partnership," in order to end sex slavery of children; and be
38 it further

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
- 2 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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